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MONDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1903.

## A Record of Disgrace.

**Railway Collisions Which Could and Should Be Avoided.**

The Interstate Commerce Commission's report for the year ending June 30, 1903, shows that the railroad casualties were 3,554 killed and 47,977 wounded, nearly all due directly to the scold refusal of railroad companies to make any improvement in their service for the prevention of collisions. To this number of casualties there is to be added today the victims of a railroad wreck in Kansas and others sacrificed since the commission made its report.

The commission says truly that this record is a disgrace to the American people. It is even more than that; it is an indictment of American railroad corporations for wholesale murder, and of Congress for complicity in the slaughter through criminal negligence.

Railway collisions are preventable, as every railroad manager well knows. There are no railway collisions in England, because the law compels the use of an efficient block system. It is as practicable to enforce such a law in the United States as in Great Britain, but it is not easy to pass such a law while the railroad corporations are permitted by the people to fill the Senate, the House, and the lobby at Washington with their attorneys and agents.

The disgrace to the American people lies in their careless toleration of the political activity of corporations deriving the right to exist from the public and enjoying special privileges, presumed to be granted in consideration of service rendered to the public. It is a reproach to the nation that instead of governing its corporate creatures it tolerates their meddling with government in any particular.

## Abandoned Farms.

**Proposition to Put Wall Street Capital Into Them.**

The "New York Press" prints an article arguing that some of the money in Wall Street be invested in the abandoned farms of New England and the South, to be used in working these farms by new methods and improved machinery. It states that our rural population is on the verge of starvation, and expresses the opinion that old-fashioned ideas of farming are responsible.

Nothing is funnier than hints on farming evolved from the brains of citizens of the metropolis, unless it is the spectacle which is presented by the average city man when he undertakes to carry out his ideas on a farm. It is true that there are some abandoned farms which have been deserted because they did not afford a decent living, but in the great majority of cases the men who left the farms of the East did so because they could do better in the richer lands of the West, or in mercantile or manufacturing life in the cities. It must be remembered that the American farmer is not exactly like the Old World peasant in either ancestry or traditions. He may be descended from men who have been farmers and nothing else for generations, or he may be the grandson of some mechanic who was the blacksmith, or cooper, or shoemaker, or carpenter, for his neighbors, and with whom farming was a side issue. In the latter case his native ingenuity and enterprise lead him to follow the trades to the cities. He is not the yoked of English hedgerows, or the Tuscan peasant, knowing only one line of work, and that the most primitive; he is more likely to be a jack-of-all-trades.

The cause of the decline in profits for Eastern farmers is mainly the competition of the West, where farming is carried on with large capital and large territory. Most native Eastern farmers could make as good a living as ever off their farms if they had a market for their goods; or could, as formerly, exchange farm products for shoes, furniture, clothing, and other necessities. The fault lies not in the farmer, but in a great industrial development which cannot and should not be checked.

The thing which Wall Street capital can do, however, for the small farmer of the East is to afford play for his mechanical ability in handicraft, and when they are crowded the atmosphere in them becomes something fearful to contemplate. These people, moreover, who suffer a cold chill at the sight of an open car are the very ones who are opposed to ventilation. We profess our horror when we hear of a large number of Italians or Greeks or other foreigners crowded together in one room in a tenement, yet many of us do not see the objection to remaining for forty minutes or an hour packed like sardines in a huge dry goods box, with a throng of our fellow creatures of all sorts and conditions. The contention of these closed car agitators, who are really cranks in a mild form, is exasperatingly unreasonable, as their favorite method of transportation is always provided for them. Why don't they ride in closed cars, and let the lovers of pure air get all of it possible.

## A Twelve-Hour Day.

**A Desirable Reform Proposed in Our Fire Department.**

The Times desires to record its indorsement of the proposed twelve-hour schedule for local firemen. Its understanding is that a bill providing for such a work-day instead of one twenty-four hours long is now pending in Congress, and it is anxious to contribute as far as it can to obtain for the measure the favorable consideration of both houses. Already the proposed legislation has been indorsed by various associations of citizens and approved by the Commissioners. The Times feels, therefore, that it speaks in this matter for the authorities as well as for its civilian readers.

Washington buildings will be more nearly secure from fire when their firemen are able to rest between "tricks," when they are able to be with their families like other men, and when they are permitted some part, at least, of the recreation enjoyed by every day laborer in the community. Then the service may offer some inducements to men strong in mind as well as in body. The wonder is today that so capable an organization was ever created when the pay is so small and the exactions are so great.

As long as no great fire occurs, many of our legislators—and many of our citizens—are apt to think our fire-fighting force abundantly large. They would think the same thing if the force were only half what it is. All the alarms the authorities might sound would not avail to teach these people the old lesson that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. But the majority, we think, both of citizens and legislators, would prefer to provide a good fire department than to rebuild a section of their city. With these people rests the fate of this twelve-hour bill.

Two women harpists in New York have joined a musicians' union. Now the non-unionists will have nothing to harp on.

How long is Senator Smoot to be benched from the outside?

The will of a Spaniard contains a bequest of \$10,000 to the first Spanish general who shall land in the United States and avenge the defeats of Cuba and the Philippines. Until this event the money is to remain on deposit in the Bank of Spain. We know this bank is incorporated, making its life immortal, but we believe the deposit will outlive its guardian.

The bitterest pill in the dose for those four youngsters who ran away from their New York home and were captured in Somerville and sent back, must have been that the newspapers all referred to them as "little boys."

It may be true that the weather has been exceptionally fine for the past two months, but let us be cautious in bragging about it until after the holidays.

Emperor William has been shooting bears, but the terror of this proceeding is lessened by the fact that they were not the two-legged kind.

Some people have been writing to the "New York Sun" complaining that they cannot get ten-thousand-dollar bills to give as Christmas presents, but perhaps they will be able to make ten-dollar ones do.

Somebody advocates changing the color of the illumination in the "red light" district as a means of moral regeneration. If this means keeping it dark the reform measure will not work.

All the little tin banks will go broke on the night before Christmas, but the children who are owners of them will not be less cheerful on that account.

**The Proper Time.**  
The time is approaching  
When mothers begin  
To look up the "parlor"  
Lost children begin in—

When holly is brought to  
The house, as a rule,  
While Johnnie and Susie  
Are busy at school.

And, sweeter, more hearty  
Than holly or myrtle,  
There floats on the air a  
Faint perfume of fir.

The time is approaching  
When all of us should  
The room of our soul fit  
For Christmas mood.

With holly of happy  
Kind feeling, that we  
May decently light there  
The Christmas tree.  
—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

## Communications From Readers of The Times

### Mortality in the District.

To the Editor of The Washington Times:  
The published mortality reports of the Health Office, without qualifying statements, have done injury and will continue to injure the welfare of the District. While the statement of the Health Officer as to the number of deaths is no dispute, the public should know that climatic conditions are rarely responsible for the death reported.

In the first place, the District of Columbia has an unusually large population composed of old people, soldiers, and residents of several thousand, and from all sections of the United States in search of office and for other purposes. These persons are near death's door before they reach Washington, and their early deaths in the natural course of things should in no manner be attributed to sanitary conditions.

Again, the insane asylum and hospitals, open to the army and navy in the first instance, and to the residents of the District of Columbia and many outlying States in the second instance, contribute a very large quota of deaths. Deaths of patients in this asylum, and in the several hospitals, are reported as District mortalities exclusively. Owing to the poor facilities offered in the outlying counties of the adjoining States, hundreds of victims of accidents and disease are brought to Washington to be treated. Nearly dead when they arrive, their deaths are treated as District losses.

Hundreds of colored women from the surrounding States come to the lying-in hospitals of the District of Columbia. As soon as they leave the hospitals or temporary abodes that they have occupied in the alleys and tenements, their deaths are reported as District mortalities. This neglect often consists of leaving children in locked rooms of dirty tenements, without fire or food.

The deaths resulting should not, therefore, be attributed to climatic conditions in the District of Columbia. It has been charged that the high death rate is largely due to the avariciousness of landlords, it being asserted that they often realize 25 per cent on their investment in tenements.

My observation and experience have demonstrated that a landlord who has a 25 per cent investment in the District of Columbia is a very great rarity. It is not the landlord who should be censured in the public prints for the unsanitary conditions that exist, but the average tenant of a small house who is very destructive. If given a sanitary house he will quickly convert it, through neglect and general carelessness, into an unsanitary domicile. The window panes are soon broken, holes kicked in the plaster, the lock broken, and in many instances the doors are taken off the hinges, broken up, and used as fire-wood. The average tenant of a small house is very destructive. If given a sanitary house he will quickly convert it, through neglect and general carelessness, into an unsanitary domicile.

His co-operation with the landlord in keeping the property in good condition would work immediately to his financial and personal benefit.  
GEO. W. KING.

Washington, Dec. 21.

### Public Teaching.

To the Editor of The Washington Times:  
It is a great mistake to suppose that teaching is confined to the work done in a school room. The greatest university in the world is a good home, and the best instructor is a wise, kind, affectionate, devoted mother.

At Chase's Theater last Saturday afternoon one of the characters placed great stress upon the necessity of courtesy and politeness in this world. The lesson was strongly put, and was a sermon in itself.

To my left was a bright-eyed boy of some eight years of age. His mother, an intelligent woman, whose whole soul was given to her child, was seated wisely in sharing with him the amusement and instruction of the hour, had the good fortune to see the value of the lessons the stage afforded and the womanly tact to co-operate in impressing the lessons presented.

Twice during the performance glasses of water were passed to the child. His interest in the play was not permitted to prevent his acknowledging the favor bestowed upon him. He indicated his gratitude by properly expressing it to all who ministered to him in any way.

The little fellow was an object of study to me. Seeing this, the mother gave him a very comfortable and likely to become a useful man. I suggested that all depended upon the character of the instruction. The influence of the influences thrown about him. I intimated that two characteristics were first, a strong attachment for home, and second, a great fondness for pets. These two points, if properly instilled and utilized, would make the boy an intelligent and useful man in the world.

If parents would study the nature of their children and instruct and govern accordingly, they would witness better results. I don't know the little fellow's name, but I predict that under the tactful training given him by his faithful mother, a bright and productive future. A boy's best friend is his mother.  
J. PRAISE RICHARD.

Washington, Dec. 21.

### A Pointer for Major Bean.

To the Editor of The Washington Times:  
In your issue of December 18 the entertaining writer of Free-Hand Comment invites correspondence from "other workmen on the very interesting and vital subject" of cheap meals.

We charge nothing for giving a pointer. Major Bean in his food experiments. The secret of the success of the food have no interest in a factory rolled out. Mrs. Rohrer, the great authority on hygienic cookery, says it takes four hours to prepare it for the table. It takes just four seconds! Do it this: Take a small handful and put it in a quart bowl, add a very little salt. Then pour upon it water near the boiling point with sufficient force to entirely separate the particles and moisten them as nearly as possible all at once. Serve immediately. With a little butter (perhaps "old") word in the dish, the "experiment" of the writer this dish—without tea, coffee, milk, or any digestion—was strictly adhered to for one month, with the following results: No appreciable difference in health, no loss of sleep, no absence of hunger, continuous severe daily toil without the common soreness or fatigue, and perhaps the most wonderful of all an increasing relish for the "soup," as his fellow-boarders jeeringly termed it. From the meat. Neither, as one might imagine, was the taste monotonous. On the contrary it appeared that the slightest difference in the temperature of the water used developed an entirely new and delicious flavor.

Notwithstanding the apparent crudeness and extreme simplicity of this food, its preparation is ideal as well as scientific. Absolute sterilization is accomplished by the relatively high temperature of the water, the method and regularity of its saturation entirely prevents that "doughy" quality so familiar to the boarding house patron, and it appears to contain every element necessary to the maintenance of the most redundant health. Lastly, it is "absolutely pure," free of mastication, easy digestion, rapidly removes the sensation of one's "having" too many cantankerous visitors, and costs not to exceed one cent per meal.  
B. W. E.

Washington, Dec. 20.

## WORK OF SURVEYING PARTIES IN ALASKA

**Geological Survey Issues Bulletin Telling of Systematic Investigation of Mining Lands.**

The Geological Survey has issued a bulletin showing the work done last summer by the surveying parties sent to Alaska. The plans carried out during the last season are part of a general scheme for a systematic investigation of Alaska's mineral wealth. So rapid is the development of this treasure land, and so great is the need for a knowledge of its limited appropriation, to keep pace with the latest discoveries and enterprises.

Seven survey parties spent the summer of 1903 in the Alaskan field. There have been carried on work of diversified character, varying from a hasty reconnaissance in the tundra belt of the Arctic slope of the Seward peninsula to a close and detailed examination of the geology and ore bodies in the densely forested region of southeastern Alaska. Two of the parties were engaged in topographic work, and two in geologic.

Whatever may be the character of these investigations, each carries with it its own peculiar interests, as well as its special drawbacks and tests of endurance. All require men who are willing to dispense with creature comforts and accept of the most primitive hardships that are little realized by those who read the official reports of the expeditions.

Two of the parties in the field during the last summer were at work in Seward peninsula, mainly in the Nome district, one was in southeastern Alaska, in the vicinity of Juneau, two in central Alaska, between the Tanana and Yukon Rivers, one along the banks of the Yukon, and one on the coast of Controller Bay.

## EXPLORER DISCOVERS RUINS IN GREENLAND

**Archaeological Researches Prove of Deep Interest.**

COPENHAGEN, Dec. 21.—Capt. Daniel Brunn, who was sent by the government to the west coast of Greenland for the purpose of making archaeological researches, has just returned to Copenhagen after a summer of successful exploration. One of the most interesting of his discoveries was the ruins of a house in which the famous missionary, Hans Egede, lived during part of his sojourn in Greenland.

Anything relating to the life of the famous founder of the Greenland missions on the desolate coast where he so long suffered himself is of interest. It was 182 years ago in 1721 that he and from Bergen, landed in west Greenland and established the town of Godthaab, or God's Hope.

Greenland had well-nigh been forgotten in the eight centuries that had elapsed since the Vikings of Norway sailed there. Egede did not go to Greenland for work among the Eskimos. He wished to help white men.

He believed there must be living in Greenland descendants of the early Norse settlers, who established their colony there in the tenth century, 500 years before Columbus. Much to his astonishment, he could find no one who he thought was descended from white men. It is probable, however, that the Eskimos who gathered around him were these descendants, for there is little doubt that they were mixed breeds with considerable white blood in their veins.

As Egede found no white men, he turned his attention to the natives, and amid the greatest privations, he and his family lived among them for many years. He gained their affection, showed them how in some ways they might improve their life, more and more, and converted many of them to Christianity.

Since his sojourn in west Greenland that coast has never ceased to be a political and religious dependency of Denmark. In addition to his work of humanity and religion, he founded a commercial company and established trading relations between the natives and the Scandinavians. One of the villages of today, Egedesminde, bears his name.

## TO BUILD FINE CITY ALONG NIPE BAY, CANADA

**Americans Get Control of 50,000 Acres Along Coast.**

SYRACUSE, Dec. 21.—Through a deal recently closed by B. McCrellan, representing the United States-Cuba Land Company, John Dunfee, of this city, became the chief owner of a tract of 50,000 acres surrounding the Bay of Nipe, Cuba. It is intended to build a city and establish a summer resort.

The land has a six-mile frontage along the bay, with navigable rivers running through it, and is one day nearer New York than Havana. In the tract are many groves of oranges and fruit farms. The city of New York can be supplied six weeks earlier with fruit from this place than from California. Former Representative J. J. Belden is one of the chief stockholders of the Central Cuban Railroad, which runs through the property.

## BOAT MAKES PERILOUS VOYAGE THROUGH ICE

BUFFALO, N. Y., Dec. 21.—The steamer J. T. Hutchinson, Captain Smith, which left Detroit on Thursday for this port, arrived here yesterday under her own steam.

The Hutchinson was on the rocks off Keweenaw Point, Lake Superior. Her trip, a record-breaking one through the ice to Detroit, was resumed on Thursday, when she sailed from that port, accompanied by two ice breakers, which conveyed her to clear water in Lake Erie.

### GOMPERS MAKING PROGRESS.

NEW YORK, Dec. 21.—President Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor, will make another attempt today to see representatives of the iron and steel industry to arrange a plan for keeping alive Local No. 2, of the iron workers. Yesterday he remarked: "I can only report progress."

## JAPAN'S IDEA ABOUT COINAGE FOR CHINA

**Chaotic Condition of Chinese Currency System Harmful—Speedy Reform Imperative.**

The conclusions of the monetary commission of Japan regarding the proposals of the American commission for a uniform system of coinage for China, based on the gold standard, have been received from Prof. Jenks by the Commission on International Exchange.

The suggestions of the American commission are indorsed. Resolutions adopted by the Japan commission declare the chaotic condition of Chinese currency is harmful both to China and the countries that have commercial relations with her. It is held that a uniform currency system should be speedily instituted in the empire, or at least in those regions that are commercially important. This system should, if possible, be based on the gold standard. The resolutions further hold that as a perfect system cannot be obtained at once, the American suggestions should be adopted as a matter of expediency.

It is also suggested that the ratio recommended for China of 22 to 1 between gold and silver should be adopted for the present, and that the country that hereafter adopts the gold standard.

## ANOTHER COTTON PEST FOUND IN MEXICO

AUSTIN, Tex., Dec. 21.—James Brown Potter, of New York, who is on his way home from Mexico, where he has a large cotton plantation, says that a new cotton pest has appeared in that country, and caused much damage to cotton in the past season. It is a pest which seems to have its native home in the mesquite trees.

## BARONESS TO REAPPEAR BEHIND FOOTLIGHTS

**Tiring of Life at Russian Court, Ida Aalberg Signs Contract With German Manager.**

ST. PETERSBURG, Dec. 21.—Despite all of the opposition that could be brought to bear by her husband and his friends, the beautiful, Baroness Nexkael, wife of one of the Czar's closest advisers, has decided to desert her social position and return to the stage, from which she retired some years ago on the occasion of her marriage. She declares she has found society in the Russian capital intolerable and desires the freedom she once enjoyed behind the footlights. Before her marriage, as Ida Aalberg, she was a noted light of the German stage, having confined most of her efforts to the interpretation of difficult roles from Ibsen plays.

When she married a few years ago Baron Nexkael, a member of the Russian crown council, it was expected that she would never again appear behind the footlights. However, she has signed a contract to reappear in Berlin next month in the title role of a play by a well-known German author.

## SUICIDE MANIA STRONG IN THIS ITALIAN FAMILY

**One Son Shoots Himself, Another Jumps From House, and Father Tries to Cut Throat.**

ROME, Dec. 21.—Lieut. Vido, of the Eighteenth Regiment of Foot, committed suicide owing to a love affair, by shooting himself with a revolver on board one of the Grand Canal steamers at Venice.

The following morning his brother, an alderman, who was to have attended the funeral, rose at 5 o'clock, and after dressing went to the top of the house and threw himself from the roof into the street below, dying shortly afterward.

Meanwhile the father of the two, who was at Venice, also rose early, and was found with a razor attempting to cut his throat, but was prevented just in time.

He is now being watched day and night.

### TIDE MOVES 767-TON BRIDGE IN 18 MINUTES

**Huge Structure Is Floated Fifty Feet to a New Position.**

NEWARK, N. J., Dec. 21.—An engineering triumph was scored today at Newark by Chief Engineer Lincoln Bush, of the Lackawanna Railroad, in the successful moving by the tide of the 767-ton steel drawbridge over the Passaic River between Newark and Harrisburg. The task was accomplished in a driving rain storm without a single hitch.

The bridge was lifted on big screws by the rising of the tide, floated fifty feet to the new position, and lowered to its place by means of "sand jacks."

Everything worked as planned, and in just eighteen minutes after the starting signal the draw was in place at the new position.

President W. H. Truesdale was present.

## M'CLELLAN WOULD BUY FATHER'S OLD HOME

WEST ORANGE, N. J., Dec. 21.—It is reported that George B. McCrellan, mayor-elect of New York, would like to regain possession of the home of his father, the late Gen. George B. McCrellan, which is situated on the mountain side in West Orange.

Although it is many years since the house was built, it is in excellent condition. It contains twenty rooms, one of which is finished in ebony.

### BUYS RUSSIAN TOYS.

ST. PETERSBURG, Dec. 21.—The "Novoye Vremya" says America has become a large purchaser of Russian toys. An order valued at 100,000 rubles has just arrived.

## COURTS AND CAPITALS OF THE OLD WORLD

**Speaker of the House of Commons—His Immense Power and Honorable Office.**

By the MARQUESS DE FOSTENOY.

Mr. Gully, grandson of that John Gully who was so famous as a prizefighter, bookmaker, race horse owner, and Derby winner in the party years of Queen Victoria's reign, has announced his intention of refusing to offer himself for re-election as speaker of the house of commons on the completion of his present term. He has held office for nearly nine years, and will on his retirement receive, as usual, a pension for the remainder of his life of \$30,000 a year, together with a peerage, which, in the case of ex-speakers, invariably takes the form of a viscountcy.

It is possible that the "first commoner" in the land, a title which the speaker of the house of commons holds by virtue of a statute enacted several centuries ago, may never see the dissolution of the present parliament, and a good deal of Tory pressure is being brought to induce him to do this. For it would enable the Tories, who possess a large majority in the present house, to select a speaker of their own party to the vacant chair. It is a singular fact that for the past twenty years the speakers of the house of commons have all been Liberals, this being due to the fact that the Liberals were usually in office when the chair was vacant.

### Matter of Etiquette.

It is a matter of etiquette that as long as a speaker offers himself for re-election on the opening of a new parliament, he should be accepted without any contest, even if he belongs to the party which is in opposition. In fact, the speaker of the house of commons is relatively rare, and the last five or six speakers of the house of commons have been elected by acclamation, and have been chosen without any opposition.

In the event of Speaker Gully resigning before the dissolution of parliament, the next speaker will be nominated by the Conservatives, who are now in power, and would be a Tory, whereas Mr. Gully, who is a Liberal, would be a member of the opposition. He would undoubtedly be one of the most powerful persons of the British empire. For the latter is governed by a parliament representing the will of the people, and by ministers of state, representing the majority of votes in the house of commons, and it is the speaker who is the supreme authority of the latter. He can suspend a member, he can stop the prime minister on a point of order, he can refuse to debate, he can decide the most momentous constitutional questions by a few words spoken in private conference, he can, even in the cabinet, decide the policy which may be vital to its policy, and which may either enhance or discredit the authority of the government.

### A Powerful Position.

The speaker of the English house of commons is a magnificent functionary, and has sometimes been declared to be the most powerful personage of the British empire. For the latter is governed by a parliament representing the will of the people, and by ministers of state, representing the majority of votes in the house of commons, and it is the speaker who is the supreme authority of the latter. He can suspend a member, he can stop the prime minister on a point of order, he can refuse to debate, he can decide the most momentous constitutional questions by a few words spoken in private conference, he can, even in the cabinet, decide the policy which may be vital to its policy, and which may either enhance or discredit the authority of the government.

There is no opt in the world that has played so important a part in history as the eye of the speaker. Its power and rights are not based on any written law, but on long established custom and tradition. Often several members rise in their places at once, at the same time, endeavoring to arrest the wandering optic of the speaker. It is then free to that august functionary to make his selection and to indicate the member who is to be permitted to speak. While he generally concedes priority to the newcomers, who are about to address the house, he is not so impartial in the performance of this particular duty that within the memory of the present speaker, the speaker of the house of commons has ever yet been taxed with unfairness.

Of course, this extremely antiquated method is attended by many disadvantages, and it often happens that members are precluded from addressing the house for weeks together and debarred from taking any part in the debate, owing to the fact that the speaker's eye, under the circumstances, falling eyesight is an almost insuperable barrier to the retention of the speaker's eye. The first commoner in the land is obliged to have good eyes.

### Emblem of Authority.

The mace which occupies so prominent a position in the chamber of the house of commons when the speaker is in the chair, which is carried before him by the sergeant-at-arms in his processions to and from the chamber, and which is ignominiously placed under the table in the house of commons when the speaker is absent, is an emblem of authority, as well as at the commencement of every new parliament, until the speaker is elected, is not so many people suppose, an emblem of the authority vested by the house in its presiding officer, but a symbol of the power of the speaker, theoretically, at any rate, the powers enjoyed by the speaker are derived from the sovereign, rather than from parliament.

In this connection it may be added that at the close of every session of the house the mace is duly surrounded by the speaker to the King's sergeant-at-arms and deposited by the latter in the royal treasury, now known as the "jewel house," in the Tower of London.

### A Magnificent Residence.

The office of speaker carries with it a magnificent official residence in the northern towers of the Palace of Westminster, the bright and lofty rooms being lighted with great windows looking out on the Thames. In addition to this residence, which is furnished and maintained for him at public expense, the speaker receives a salary of £3,000 a year, besides most generous allowances. When the house is in session the speaker gives a series of official banquets and levees. These are stately affairs, and the gentlemen who attend them are expected to appear either in uniform or in court dress, the ordinary evening dress being strictly tabooed.

The speaker himself receives his guests in a black coat suit and steel helmeted sword, and is attended by his train-bearer, his secretary, his gentlemen-in-waiting, his chaplain, and by the King's sergeant-at-arms. The banquet table is laid in the north wing of the room, the windows of which look out to the north, and from them may be seen the long stretch of the Thames, the river with its perfect fairland of electric lamps and moving lights.